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# Message Text

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21
ACTION SCI-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 EA-11 ISO-00 FEA-02 ACDA-19 CIAE-00

INR-11 IO-14 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 RSC-01 FPC-01 DRC-01

/102 W
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R 021224Z OCT 74
FM USMISSION EC BRUSSELS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7556
AEC GERMANTOWN 1319
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

UNCLAS EC BRUSSELS 7647

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: TECH
SUBJECT: EUROPEAN CAPABILITY FOR REPROCESSING LWR FUEL

REF: STATE 200539

1. SUMMARY: IN RESPONSE TO STATE 200539, PRESENT STATUS AND FUTURE PLANS FOR EUROPEAN CHEMICAL PROCESSING OF NUCLEAR POWER REACTOR FUEL HAS BEEN REVIEWED WITH EXPERIENCED PERSONNEL AT EUROCHEMIC, DIRECTORATE FOR NUCLEAR ENERGY IN EEC AND BELGIAN UTILITY REPRESENTATIVE TO OPEN. RESULTS INDICATE NO EUROPEAN CAPACITY AVAILABLE FOR PROCESSING U.S. FUEL UNTIL AFTER STARTUP OF NEW FRENCH PLANT AND RESTART OF BRITISH PLANT IN 1976-78 PERIOD PLUS TIME REQUIRED TO WORK OFF BACKLOG OF EUROPEAN FUEL. UNITED REPROCESSORS (UK, FRENCH, GERMAN CO.) ARE PRESENTLY CONTRACTING FOR CHEMICAL PROCESSING SERVICES AND ARE ACCEPTING SPENT FUEL DELIVERIES. IN SOME CASES, THEY HAVE RETURNED PLUTONIUM AND URANIUM FROM EXISTING SUPPLIES PENDING STARTUP OF FACILITIES.
ANY STATEMENT ON PROJECTED EUROPEAN PLANTS ACHIEVING DESIGN
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CAPACITY WOULD BE UNEDUCATED GUESSING.

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DATA ON INDIVIDUAL PLANTS AT EUROCHEMIC IN BELGIUM, WINDSCALE IN U.K., LAGAGUE IN FRANCE, AND KRLSRUHE PLUS FUTURE LARGE NEW PLANTS IN GERMANY FOLLOWS. END SUMMARY.

2. REFTEL NOTES PRESENT AND POSSIBLE FUTURE DELAYS IN STARTUP OF U.S. PROCESSING FACILITIES FOR U.S. LIGHT WATER REACTOR FUEL AND REQUESTED ASSESSMENT OF EUROPEAN CAPACITY TO HANDLING U.S. FUEL. THE PRESENT SITUATION IN EUROPE IS THE SAME AS IN THE U.S. PLUS EUROPEAN EXPERIENCE WITH HIGH BURN-UP OXIDE FUEL IS QUITE LIMITED WITH ONLY 120 T'S. PROCESSED AT EUROCHEMIC AND 40 T'S AT WINDSCALE TO DATE. THE EUROCHEMIC PLANT IS PRESENTLY BEING MOTH-BALLED AND WINDSCALE WAS SHUTDOWN FOLLOWING AN OPERATING INCIDENT IN OCTOBER 1973 AND IS NOT SCHEDULED TO BE BACK IN SERVICE BEFORE 1976. A SMALL 30-40 T/YR PLANT AT KARLSRUHE IS COMPLETED BUT STILL EXPERIENCING STARTUP AND POSSIBLY MORE SUBSTANTIVE DESIGN PROBLEMS. ONE SOURCE STATES ITS A DISASTER SIMILAR TO GE PLANT AT MORRIS.

3. THE OPERATION OF EUROCHEMIC WAS OFFICIALLY TERMINATED ON JULY 1, 1974 WHEN THE 13 ORIGINAL MEMBER COUNTRIES DID NOT UNANIMOUSLY AGREE TO CONTINUE ITS SUPPORT AS REQUIRED BY THE CHARTER. SOME OPERATIONS ARE CONTINUING WHILE THE PLANT IS BEING PLACED IN STAND-BY AND PLANS ARE COMPLETED TO TREAT THE INTER-MEDIATE AND HIGH LEVEL WASTE. THE DECISION TO DISCONTINUE EUROCHEMIC OPERATIONS FOLLOWED FORMATION OF UNITED REPROCESSORS BY THE U.K., FRANCE AND GERMANY AS A MARKETING ORGANIZATION AND COORDINATION GROUP FOR FUTURE EUROPEAN REPROCESSING PLANTS. THEIR PLANS ARE TO USE EXISTING OR COMMITTED FACILITIES IN FRANCE AND THE U.K. PLUS A SCHEDULED NEW LARGE PLANT IN GERMANY TO COVER ALL PROJECTED EUROPEAN NEEDS THROUGH 1985.

4. THE NOMINAL CAPACITY AND OPERATING STATUS OF EUROPEAN PLANTS FOLLOWS:

A. EUROCHEMIC PLANT, MOL, BELGIUM - NOMINAL CAPACITY 70-100 T/YR WITH PRESENT OPERATING CAPACITY OF 50 T/YR FOR OXIDE TYPE POWER REACTOR FUEL (DUE TO LIMITATIONS RESULTING FROM CHEMICAL DISSOLUTION HEAD END.
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AS OF 7/1/74, EUROCHEMIC OFFICIALLY CEASED OPERATION. SOME FUEL IS STILL BEING PROCESSED AS PART OF CLEAN-UP OPERATIONS. A STUDY IS BEING EVALUATED TO FORM A NEW COMPANY WITH JUST BELGIAN OWNERSHIP OR SUPPORT FROM A NEW MULTINATIONAL GROUP AND INCREASE THE PLANT CAPACITY TO 300 T/YR. DECISIONS ARE EXPECTED IN THE NEXT 3-6 MONTHS. IT HAS ALREADY BEEN DECIDED TO MOTH-BALL THE PLANT IN STANBY CONDITION THROUGH JANUARY 1977 UNLESS THERE IS AN EARLIER DECISION TO REORGANIZE

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AND UPRATE THE FACILITY.
A NEW FRENCH PLANT AT LA HAGUE IS SCHEDULED TO STARTUP
IN JULY 1976 WITH 600 T/YR CAPACITY. THIS PLANT MAY BE
1-2 YEARS LATE AND WILL BE FULLY SATURATED WITH JUST
FRENCH FUEL BY 1981-82 PERIOD IF THE 1976 STARTUP DATE IS MET.

B. THE UK PLANT AT WINDSCALE HAS A 300 T/YR CAPACITY FOR
OXIDE FUEL BUT WAS SHUTDOWN IN OCTOBER 1973 FOLLOWING AN
OPERATING INCIDENT AND IS DUE TO REMAIN DOWN UNTIL 1976 FOR
SAFETY AND OPERATING MODIFICATIONS WHICH WILL ALSO INCLUDE
ENLARGING THE PLANT TO 800 T/YR CAPACITY. SOME CONSIDERATION
IS STILL BEING GIVEN TO BUILDING A NEW 800 T/YR PLANT RATHER
THAN MODIFY THE EXISTING PLANT.
C. A SMALL GERMAN PLANT AT KARLSRUHE IS COMPLETE BUT IS
HAVING STARTUP AND OPERATING DIFFICULTIES AS NOTED IN PARA.
2.. IT HAS A NOMINAL CAPACITY OF 30-35 T/YR.

E. A NEW GERMAN PLANT IS DUE ON LINE BY 1985 WITH 1500
T/YR CAPACITY. THERE HAS BEEN SOME PUBLICITY ABOUT
MOVING THIS DATE UP TO 1983. EUROCHEMIC PEOPLE BELIEVE
GERMAN REPROCESSING EXPERIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IS VERY WEAK
AND GETTING A LARGE 1500 T/YR PLANT IN OPERATION BY 1985
WILL BE DIFFICULT WITHOUT CONSIDERABLE OUTSIDE HELP.

5. THE TOTAL EUROPEAN EXPERIENCE TO DATE IN PROCESSING HIGH
EXPOSURE OXIDE FUEL IS 120 T AT EUROCHEMIC AND 40 T AT WINDSCALE.

6. COMMENT: MOST OF THE ABOVE INFORMATION WAS PROVIDED BY
EUROCHEMIC AND IS CONSIDERED A REALISTIC PICTURE OF THE SITUATION.
PRECISE DATA ON ACTUAL CONTRACT COMMITMENTS IS NOT READILY AVAIL-
ABLE AT THIS COMMERCIAL-TYPE INFORMATION POSSESSED BY UNITED
REPROCESSORS. CHEMICAL REPROCESSING CAPACITY AND DEMAND DATA
AVAILABLE AT EC IN BRUSSELS IS VERY OUTDATED AND NEW INFORMATION
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BASED ON OUR INQUIRY WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE UNTIL DECEMBER. NEW
DATA FROM AN OPEN MEETING ON THIS SUBJECT WILL BE AVAILABLE IN LATE
OCTOBER. GREENWALD

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# Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X
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**Channel Indicators:** n/a
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED
**Concepts:** URANIUM, NUCLEAR ENERGY, PETROLEUM PRODUCTION, INDUSTRIAL PLANTS, NUCLEAR FUELS, NUCLEAR REACTORS
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**Draft Date:** 02 OCT 1974
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**Disposition Action:** n/a
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**Subject:** EUROPEAN CAPABILITY FOR REPROCESSING LWR FUEL
**TAGS:** TECH, XG, US, EEC
**To:** STATE
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